



U.S. AIR FORCE

## This Week in USAF and PACAF History 30 November - 6 December 2009



1 December 1887 Hawaii's King Kalakaua reluctantly agreed with his cabinet's recommendation to **cede Pearl Harbor** to the United States. America now had exclusive rights to enter Pearl Harbor, improve its entrance channel, and establish a coaling and repair station.



6 December 1907 U.S. Army Lieutenant Thomas E. Selfridge became the **first Army officer to solo** in a powered aircraft, the White Wing. The following year, Lt Selfridge was killed while riding as an observer with Orville Wright during a demonstration flight at Fort Myer, Virginia.

1-16 December 1914 Lts Herbert A. Dargue and Joseph O. Mauborgne accomplished the **first demonstration of two-way radio-telegraphy between the air and ground** to the Army, while flying a Burgess-Wright plane in the Philippines.

30 November 1925 **No independent Air Force yet.** A board appointed by President Calvin Coolidge and headed by Dwight W. Morrow released a report recommending conservative reorganization of the Air Service and its redesignation as the Air Corps, rather than establishment of an independent air force coequal with the Army and Navy. The Morrow Board Report also recommended a five-year expansion plan for Army aviation.

2 Dec 1936 **The Boeing YB-17 made its maiden flight.** Even after awarding a contract to the far less expensive B-18 Bolo, the Air Corps was so impressed with Boeing's bomber design that they used a legal loophole to order 13 YB-17s as test aircraft. The B-17 "Flying Fortress" went on to enter full-scale production as the first truly mass-produced large aircraft. It was used primarily in the strategic bombing campaign against Germany and it also conducted raids on Japanese shipping in the Pacific. The B-17's legendary ability to survive extensive battle damage, belly landings and ditchings made it the favorite bomber among World War II aircrews. The B-17 dropped more bombs than any other U.S. aircraft in the war.



1 Dec 1941 By executive order, **President Roosevelt established the Civil Air Patrol** to facilitate civil defense during World War II. Including among its members 17-year-old men not yet of draft age, the Civil Air Patrol flew small liaison aircraft on disaster-relief missions or on



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missions to patrol the U.S. coasts to detect enemy submarine activity. In the fall of 1943, the Civil Air Patrol became an auxiliary of the Army Air Forces.

3 December 1945 The 412th Fighter Group received its first P-80 aircraft at March Field, becoming the **first Army Air Forces fighter unit equipped with jet-propelled aircraft**.

5 December 1949 The USAF diverted \$50 million from other projects to build a **radar screen in Alaska and certain US areas** after detecting a Soviet atomic explosion in August 1949. The successful Soviet test came several years earlier than expected and alarmed U.S. defense experts.



B-45 Tornado

4 Dec 1950 **MiG-15s shot down a USAF B-45 Tornado** reconnaissance aircraft, marking the **first successful jet bomber interception** in airpower history. Two days later, the 27th Fighter Escort Wing began flying combat operations from Taegu, bringing F-84 Thunderjets to the war.



F-84 Thunderjet

30 November 1951 In a **major Korean War air battle** over the island of Taehwa-do, F-86 pilots engaged a squadron of enemy bombers escorted by about 30 fighters. Only three damaged enemy bombers made it back to North Korea. Major George Davis Jr., USAF, achieved Korean War ace status by downing a TU-2 bomber and a MiG-15. He was the first to be an ace in two wars, since he already had seven kills in World War II. Major Winton Marshal, USAF, also became an ace, destroying a TU-2 and an LA-9 fighter. (F-86 photo above.)



USAF aircraft helped dislodge the enemy, enabling friendly forces to retake the island.

30 November 1956 The **TM-61 Matador**, a jet-powered cruise missile, completed final testing and became the Air Force's first fully operational tactical missile.

2 December 1966 "**Black Friday**" of the Vietnam War. The Air Force lost five aircraft and the Navy three to SAMs or anti-aircraft fire. Air Force losses included three F-4Cs, one RF-4C, and an F-105. The Navy lost one F-4B and two Douglas A-4C Skyhawks. Losses such as these led DoD officials to accelerate acquisition programs and tactics developments aimed at suppressing enemy air defense systems.



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2 December 1991 **Thirteenth Air Force established headquarters at Andersen AFB, Guam** after officially departing Clark AB, Philippines in November.

1 December 1993 **North Korean goal to reunify the peninsula by force.** Vice Marshal Choe Kwang, Chief of the General Staff of the North Korean military (and defense minister, 1995-97), declared at a major state function that the military “has the heavy and honorable task of reunifying the fatherland with guns in the nineties without fail.”



2-13 December 1993 Air Force Col. Richard O. Covey (left), pilot and mission commander, piloted the fifth flight of the shuttle *Endeavor*, which set a record of five spacewalks. **In one of the most challenging space missions ever**, astronauts aboard the *Endeavor* repaired the Hubble Space Telescope. Air Force Lt. Col. Tom Akers (right) became the U.S. record holder for spacewalks with 29 hours and 40 minutes.

5 December 1994 **The START I Treaty went into force.** The breakup of the Soviet Union had delayed START's entry into force for nearly three-and-a-half years until Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine, which had inherited strategic nuclear weapons from the Soviet Union, ratified START and joined the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as non-nuclear states.

6 December 1995 **Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR.** USAF airlifters started moving troops and equipment to Bosnia. This NATO operation implemented the Dayton Peace Accord between Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia reached at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.

3 December 2001 Lockheed Martin delivered the USAF's **first C-130J-30** to the 143 AW (ANG) at Quonset State Airport, R. I. These aircraft have a longer fuselage than the standard “J” model. They carry 128 combat troops or 8 pallets rather than 92 troops or 6 pallets.